

CLAIMS

1. A method of providing a pause function for a broadcast program in a multi-client network, the method comprising:

- 5 allocating predetermined storage limits in a storage device for a plurality of clients on the network;
displaying (54) a broadcast program to a client;
receiving (56) a pause request from the client;
determining (58) if the client's stored broadcast programming has reached
10 the client's predetermined storage limit;
pausing (60) the display of the broadcast program if the client's stored broadcast programming has not reached the client's predetermined storage limit;
storing (60) the broadcast program in the storage device while the display of the broadcast program is paused; and
15 displaying (64) the stored broadcast program if the client's stored broadcast programming has reached the client's predetermined storage limit.

2. The method of claim 1, further including the steps of:

- receiving a play request from the client; and
20 displaying (64) the stored broadcast program to the client.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of allocating predetermined storage limits for the plurality of clients includes allocating identical storage limits for the plurality of clients.

25 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of allocating predetermined storage limits for the plurality of clients includes allocating different storage limits for some of the plurality of clients.

30 5. The method of claim 1, further including the steps of:

- receiving a rewind request from the client; and
permitting the client to rewind through the stored broadcast program if the client's stored broadcast programming has not reached the client's predetermined storage limit.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of displaying the stored broadcast programming includes:

receiving a fast forward request from the client;

5 fast forwarding through the stored broadcast programming; and

permitting the client to pause the display of the program until the client's predetermined storage limit is again reached.

10 7. A system for providing a pause function for a broadcast program in a multi-client network, the system comprising:

means (30) for allocating predetermined storage limits in a storage device (32) for a plurality of clients on the network;

means (12, 36, 44) for displaying a broadcast program to a client;

means (44) for receiving a pause request from the client;

15 means (12, 30) for determining if the client's stored broadcast programming has reached the client's predetermined storage limit;

means (12) for pausing the display of the broadcast program if the client's stored broadcast programming has not reached the client's predetermined storage limit;

20 means (30) for storing the broadcast program in the storage device (32) while the display of the broadcast program is paused; and

means (30, 36, 44) for displaying the stored broadcast program if the client's stored broadcast programming has reached the client's predetermined storage limit.

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8. The system of claim 7, further comprising:

means (44) for receiving a play request from the client; and

means (30, 36, 44) for displaying the stored broadcast program to the client.

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9. The system of claim 7 wherein means (30) for allocating predetermined storage limits for the plurality of clients includes means for allocating identical storage limits for the plurality of clients.

35 10. The system of claim 7 wherein the means (30) for allocating predetermined storage limits for the plurality of clients includes means for allocating different storage limits for some of the plurality of clients.

11. The system of claim 7, further comprising:

means (44) for receiving a rewind request from the client; and

means (30) for permitting the client to rewind through the stored broadcast program if the client's stored broadcast programming has not reached the client's predetermined storage limit.

12. The system of claim 7, wherein the means (30, 36, 44) for displaying the stored broadcast programming includes:

means (44) for receiving a fast forward request from the client;

means (30) for fast forwarding through the stored broadcast programming; and

means (30) for permitting the client to pause the display of the program until the client's predetermined storage limit is again reached.